

FOOT PROSTHESIS HAVING CUSHIONED ANKLE

Abstract of the Disclosure

A simple, inexpensive prosthetic foot is provided incorporating a cushioned ankle including an ankle block formed of a resilient material or bladder having desired compliance and energy return characteristics. The ankle block is sandwiched between a foot element and an ankle element. One or more openings extends through the ankle block with a substantially transverse orientation relative to a forward walking motion. The size and shape of these openings, as well as the insertion of different types of stiffeners therein, provide desired performance characteristics to the ankle block. When the ankle block takes the form of one or more inflatable bladders, the pressure within these bladders is individually controlled by valves to provide desired performance characteristics to different portions of the prosthetic foot. A pump system can also be used to control and generate fluid pressure into these bladders. A preferred pump system generates fluid pressure based upon the movement of the amputee onto two telescoping pylons that are connected to the prosthetic foot.

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